Crude Oil Crises in the Niger Delta: Prospecting a Theorization of Militancy Sub-genre of Action Film in a Selected Nollywood Narrative.

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Abstract

Militancy has become one of the most popular lexicons to describe civil crises and agitations associated with crude oil exploration in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. It consists of groups of disillusioned members of host communities who feel exploited, neglected, underdeveloped and grossly short changed by government and critical stakeholders in the oil and gas exploration business in their area and as such, vent their frustrations and aggressions on the state through different forms of civil disturbances. Whereas, the crude oil crises in the Niger Delta Region provides a robust potential for emergent theories in Nigerian film scholarship, studies designed to investigate the prospects of expanding the scope of the action film genre from its abundant deposits are reasonably scarce. This study investigated the cause and effect of the crude oil crises in the Niger Delta and further scrutinized the motif and operational methodology of the militant groups with the view of heralding the Militancy Sub-Genre Theory of the Action film genre. The study was guided by the Frustration-Aggression and the action film Genre theories to qualitatively examine a purposively sampled film titled: Black November (Jeta Amata 2012). A critical textual anatomy of the selected film text revealed the preponderance of the conventional codes of the action film genre in it. This study therefore, contributed to knowledge by theorizing Militancy as a distinct sub-genre of the action film genre in Nollywood. The study recommended that more attention should be paid to the excavation, development and general propagation of home grown African theories to the development of theatre and film scholarship.

Keywords: Oil, Gas, Crises, Theorization, Militancy Sub-genre, Action Film.

Introduction

Since the early 2000s in Nigerian history, a new dimension to insecurity had surged around the Niger Delta Region, causing great tension and severe unrest in the land. Disgruntled youths of the region had formed themselves into militia groups, wrecking great havocs and undertaking wanton coordinated attacks on crude oil facilities, indiscriminate hostage taking of foreign experts and causing other related social glitches.

The discovery of crude oil in Oloibiri community of the present day Bayelsa state has been widely characterized with mixed feelings of happiness and sadness between critical stakeholders and beneficiaries in the oil and gas sector as opposed to the impoverished masses of the host communities. Crude oil has been established to be the nucleus of the Nigerian economy accounting for about ninety percent of the foreign exchange earnings for the country and eighty percent of federal revenue (HRW, cited in Dede 2014, p.31). It is one of the numerous natural resources Nigeria is endowed with and it is mostly located around the Niger Delta Region of the country. Despite its enormous economic impact to the Nigerian nation, the crude oil economy has been associated with a lot of poverty, impoverishment and crises in the Niger Delta Region of the country.
The Nigerian filmmaker’s response to this social trend has resulted in the circulation of a category of films which dwell on the subject of militancy, a wordlist which denotes violence and aggressive agitations in the Niger Delta Region. Looking at the conventional codes of the action film genre, the need to explore the *modus operandi* of the militancy category of film with the view of prospecting the expansion of the action film genre theory from the home grown activities of militancy in the region has become expedient.

The action film genre is one of the most captivating film genres known to have significantly impacted film narratives globally, established cadres of universally reputed practitioners and generated huge revenues for the state and individuals involved. Studies have established it to be the foremost genre in contemporary Hollywood Cinema, which has extensively generated fundamental discussions. Tasker (2004, p.18). Dancygar (2007 p.270) further explains that the development of such globally reputed super stars like Sylvester Stallion, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Bruce Willis, Chuck Norris, Steven Spielberg and George Lucas amongst others are due to the success of the genre in Hollywood. In Asia, the success of the action film genre is represented by such superstars as Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan. The action film genre usually combines violence, corporal fights, crossfire of weaponry, swift pursuits and narrow escapes amongst others with different forms of captivating camera exposures and rhythmic speed to explore a clash between the good and the bad characters.

This genre of film has excelled tremendously in most western film cultures of the world. In Hollywood, its studies have heralded many sub-generic classes with clearly distinctive conventional codes as exemplified by war film, cow boy, spy, adventure, martial arts, and so on. In Nigeria however, since the emergence of Nollywood in 1992, not much scholarly attention has been paid to the reading of the action film genre. Apart from the problems associated with the dearth of research materials on its subject area, the form and content of this promising film genre in Nigeria remains underdeveloped in scholarship. In view of Okwuowulu’s (2016,p.2) assertion that the Nigerian video film industry has presently attained global prominence, one thinks that it has become deserving of such a critical area like the action film to enjoy robust and far-reaching scholarly attention. A successful appropriation of this would contribute to a theorization of the Militancy Sub-genre of the Action Film in Nollywood

**Theoretical Framework**

This paper was guided by two theories: the *Frustration-Aggression Theory* and the *Action Film Genre Theory*. The *Frustration-Aggression* theory believes that frustration always paves the way for aggression and that frustration itself is an energiser to aggression. This theory is believed to be appropriate in explaining insurgences and upheavals usually caused by the depressed section of society who may express their accumulated frustrations and angers through violence. This theory shall be used to analyse the impact of frustration amongst the oil bearing host communities in Niger Delta in stimulating aggression and crisis in the area.
The Action Film Genre Theory
According to Iloma (2018, p.300) the action film genre presents a moral interplay between the good and ill-motivated characters in such a way that physical combats, frantic chases, violence, inconceivable odds and other life threatening situations are encountered”. Furthermore, Ayakoroma (2014, p. 95) posits that the genre is characterized with “high energy, physical stunts, chases, battles, fights, escapes and spectacles that take the audiences’ breath away”. For Jennifer Bean (2004, p.24) “The most notable characteristic of the action cinema is its dynamic tempo: rapid editing at once articulates and accelerates the breath-taking pace of the stunting human body… the action film ‘speaks’ through visual spectacle, that spectacle, in fact, takes precedence over narrative meaning”. This theory shall also be explored to scrutinize the potentials of the action film genre from the militancy background in the Niger Delta region.

Review of relevant literatures
Action film has been widely ascribed to be an emerging film genre in Nollywood film practice as much as scholarship. Unlike the broadly grown popularity of the genre in other western film cultures of Hollywood, Asia, China, Britain and others, it cannot be comfortably said that the action film genre in Nollywood has gathered a corresponding momentum with her afore mentioned western counterparts. In recent years however, a concerted attempt have been made to expand the horizon of the action film genre in Nigeria by developing some home-grown experiences from various aspects of the Nigerian lives.

In a study titled: Towards a theorization of the Communal War subgenre of the action film in Selected Nollywood Films, Iloma (2022, pp35-45) attempts to localize the action film genre in Africa by investigating communal war experiences which has become replete in African history. Iloma argued that due to the extra-ordinary success of this film genre in Hollywood, many Nigerian film scholars tend to imbibe the Hollywood paradigms in analysing the genre in Nigeria. He argues that most often, conclusions reached from such analysis always yield faulty results stressing that issues of cultural differences between the first-world American society and the third-world Africa must be put into consideration in attempting to analyse the action film genre in Nigeria. Iloma (p.35) observes that the cultural background which propels the action film genre in Hollywood is the extremely advanced scientific and technological life in America which feature preponderantly in their action film genre as evident in the exuberant use of stunts and magnificent visual illusions. He posits that since the hi-tech cultural life in America is not applicable to the traditional cultural life in Nigeria, the need to search for home-grown indigenous paradigms to aid analysis of the action film genre in Nollywood has become imperative. Finding prospect in communal war experience which has become recurrent in Nigerian cultural history, Iloma (pp37-42) investigated the action film genre using two Nigerian films: Invasion 1987 (Lancelot Oduwa Imasuen 2014) and the Battle of Muzanga (Bolaji Dawudu, 1996) After embarking on a critical textual anatomy of these films, Iloma makes a ground breaking discovery of the action film genre in Nigeria through communal war experiences. He sees the
indices of the action film playing out through fights of moral interplay between two or more communities. He also sees the physical properties of the genre playing out through brutal violence, physical feat, frantic chase, narrow escapes and cross fire of arms and ammunitions. He discovers the major instruments and methodology of warfare to be traditional with a punctuated synchronization of war songs scored against major conflicts to heighten tension. Iloma further sees reliance on religious rituals to win battles as key to securing divine help from the supernatural beings as preponderant in this category of the action film as opposed to the Hollywood genre which relies on the inestimable strength of technology to solve critical problems. He further sees the use of powerful camera and editing techniques with swift camera movements and engrossing editing techniques as inherent in propelling this film genre.

Furthermore, Iloma, Shaka and Uwah (2018, pp299-313) contextualized the action film genre in Nollywood by investigating the it from the background of vigilantism in Nigeria. They describe vigilantism as powerful voluntary organizations established for the purpose of combating crime and restoring sanity in crime-ridden areas. They posit that the vigilante in Nigeria is an organisation borne out of necessity, stressing that due to the inability of conventional security system of state to comfortably combat rising and provocative issues of insecurity in Nigeria, concerned people volunteer to put their lives in the line with the view of combating insecurity and restoring sanity. Reading from Issakaba II (Lancelot Imasuen Oduwa, 2001), Iloma, Shaka and Uwah describe how the land of Oshota is bedevilled with a spate of insecurity where cases of armed robbery, incessant killings and money ritual murder had taken a toll and brought fear and tension on the citizens. Issakaba, a group of vigilante organization is brought to restore peace. They engage in serious fights against the criminal gangs which eventually lead to their conquest and sanitization of the community.

This category of films reveal action through series of combats between members of vigilante groups and gangs of criminal bandits in which, the vigilante finally triumphs. Citing Iloma (2018), Iloma, Shaka and Uwah observe that the characters in this genre are drawn along the divides of crime and justice. Whereas the criminal gangs and their cohorts represent agents of crime who indulge in various categories of crime against humanity, the vigilante group represent light and justice who fights crime head on. They further describe the nature of fight in this category of film to involve a fusion of physical feat and voodoo display which relies on a cross fire of spiritual missiles, spiritually motivated bullet proofs, use of omen and spiritually motivated necklace used to stimulate confessions to crime. They also maintain that this category of film portrays escape and pursuit through a mix of physical and metaphysical means as shown in acts of disappearances and reappearances, explaining that most often, the vigilante groups have superior metaphysical powers over the criminal gangs which aid their defeat. Iloma, Shaka and Uwah further add that this category of films is also facilitated by the fascinating effects of Computer Generated Imagery CGI and animations.
which conjure excitement through probable and realistic cinematic illusions.

The militancy subgenre of action film as would be explored in this study is aimed at investigating the possibility of the action film genre from the activities of militancy in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. In a study titled: The Motion Picture industry in Nigeria, A Critical Appraisal, Shaka, Uwah and Uchendu (2014, p. 213) comment on the Niger Delta oil crises as emerging from the political and socio-economic issues in Nigeria which began to feature prominently in films such as: The Genesis, Liquid Black Gold, Militants, Amnesty, Crude War, Tears of Oil and others, in Nollywood. The Niger Delta Militants had taken to arms as means of venting their anger on government over failure of state to grant them power to control the natural resources found in their own lands. This is heightened by the compounding problems of environmental degradation and total negligence of the people. Dede (2014, p.146) rightly posits:

The federal government’s insensitivity to the agitation of the Niger Delta people for the control of their resources and the abuse of the environment has generated an increasingly sophisticated youth militancy and guerrilla warfare which has attracted the emergent film culture, which has exploited the crisis as themes in its productions….

The Niger Delta ethnic nationalism genre of Nollywood film genre has evolved from a long history of social, cultural, economic subjugation, marginalization and denigration of the people.

These people who are dominantly farmers and fishermen live on the proceeds of farming and fishing but are believed to have had their agrarian and aquatic lives destroyed without due compensation owing to the activities of oil explorations in the land. The people are also frustrated with the unending problems associated with the failure of government to provide basic infrastructures such as good road, pipe born water and electricity for them, while resources gotten from their lands have been used to develop state of the arts cities from other parts of the country. Even more annoying to them is the fact that while they live impoverished, multi-million dollar oil blocks in their own farmlands are owned and controlled by strangers. Frustrated by this circumstance and consequent upon the fact that all avenues of engaging the government in dialogue had purportedly failed, angry men and women form themselves into militant groups which embarked on activities of terrorism aimed at forcing the government to address their problems. Justifying this kind of frustration emanating aggression, Esiaba (1989, p.25) maintains:

Terrorism is a legitimate tactic of all down trodden people seeking to combat an oppressive government. Without terrorism by the IRA, would the republic of Ireland have gained her independence today, Without terrorism by the Mou Mou, would there be Kenya today, Without terrorism by the Iguns and Stern gangs, would there be Israel
today, Without terrorism by the Algerians, would the French ever have agreed to leave North Africa in 1962. Without terrorism in South Africa, do you think apartheid would have been dismantled?

The militant groups which included Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) and the Niger Delta Avengers, alongside other agitators, are predominantly engaged in the activities of kidnapping, bombing and explosion of oil installations, shootings, chase, escapes and the likes.

Available literatures on this class of film have recognized it as militants or crude oil genre. S. A Dede. (2014, p.146), in his doctoral thesis, conceptualizes this category of film as Niger Delta ethnic nationalism film genre arguing that this class of film has “done more to call attention to the agitations of the people than arm struggles and confrontations have been able to do.”

After doing a copious reading of the following films: Charles Inojie’s Genesis (2009), Ikenna Aniekwe’s, Liquid Black Gold (2008) and Amnesty (2010), Ugezu Ugezu’s The King of the Crude (2008) and Crude War (2011) and Ikechi Onwuchuba’s Oil at My Backyard (2012), Dede discovers that youth restiveness and militancy in the Niger Delta region are caused by a combination of the following factors: marginalization of youths of the region by (government, oil companies, local chiefs, corrupt law enforcement officers or multinational corporations etc.) (2014, p.342). Looking at the problems of the Niger Delta people as postulated by Dede, and considering the fact that their land contributes to “more than 90 per cent foreign exchange earnings and 80 per cent of federal revenue in Nigeria”HRW, (as cited in Dede, 2014, p.31), it is only ethical for them to fight for their rights. Hence, the Niger Delta films analysed by Dede tell similar narrative bordering on resistance.

Dede’s analysis above is concerned with the sociological impact of the Niger Delta problems with the view of drawing attention on their plights. The work does not however focus on the possibility of thinking the action film genre from the activities of the militants. Looking at the eminence of action envisaged in these films, this study considers it imperative to explore how the codes and conventions of the action film genre are demonstrated in them.

Research Methodology
Methodologically, this study adopted a qualitative research in which some variables were investigated to scrutinize the potentials of the militancy genre from the oil and gas crisis in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. The study was limited to a population of one film: Black November (Jeta Amata 2012). The sampling technique adopted was purposive in which, the researcher purposely selected the film under review due to its relevance to the issue of discourse. This is in agreement with Ofo (1999, p.65) who suggests that purposive sampling is a method in which the researcher simply hand-picks the sample because he considers them typical to what he wants. The two sources of data collection for this study included the primary and secondary sources which arrived at the study of a film at the primary level and the study of other library materials at the secondary level. The method of textual analysis entails the researcher’s
adoption of a textual evaluation and critical reading of *Black November* (Jeta Amata 2012) to investigate its main subject of discourse. The validation of instrument was done by the researcher.

**Discussion and Presentation of Data: A Critical Analysis of Black November**

*Black November* tells the story of resistance on the part of Niger Delta people against environmental degradation and wanton oil drillings in their land. The Federal Government of Nigeria has just set a noose at the Warri prisons where the hanging of the environmental activist, Ebiere Perema, would be expedited. In a swift reaction at a scene at Los Angeles, U.S.A, a militia group known as United Peoples’ Front for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta People of Nigeria kidnaps Tom Hudson, the CEO of the major oil company operating in Niger Delta region, Western Oil, a reporter and her cameraman and a host of others. This militia group led by Timi holds her captives’ hostage for seven hours in a tunnel that is closed off at the both sides, defiling all efforts by the security operatives and members of the public to identify them or even know their motif. After compelling Kristy to record their activities in the tunnel, the militia group reveal to Tom Hudson that their mission in Los Angeles was to save Ebiere from being hanged in Nigeria. They declare that if Ebiere happens to be hung as she has been so convicted, those who are truly guilty of the situation would go down with her. Using the camera of the reporter, Tamuno, a member of the gang discloses their excruciating experiences in the hands of both the Western Oil and Federal Government of Nigeria to the general public.

An oil pipeline has just busted in Warri causing serious and persistent environmental hazards. While the oil company fails to evacuate the oil spills that are fast ravaging the environment, the villagers resort to self-help by fetching some oil from the spillage site. The film flashes back to twenty one years ago at Warri to reveal the birth and development of Ebiere and then, her award of overseas scholarship by the Western Oil. As she arrives home from her over sea study, she is told that her mother and siblings are fetching fuel from the site where the spillage takes place. Trouble ensues when police operatives ask villagers to vacate the site, as they refuse; a police officer strikes his lighter to light up his cigarette. This act causes serious explosion that engulfs the entire villagers on site including himself. Prompted by this gory sight, Ebiere mobilizes her community people for peaceful protests and agitations for the clean-up and maintenance of their land, and better treatment for her people. Ebiere and her group are accosted with incessant beatings, killings and arrests by the military. It is however the belief of Dede, a man who lost his wife and only child to the explosion that the government does not listen to the language of protest but can only understand the language of violence. Based on this conviction, Dede forms a militant group which engages in vandalisation of the company’s facilities and the kidnap of company top officials. In this film, action is expressed through the varieties of chase, narrow escapes, swift pursuits, pace, camera movements and editing techniques. The action film genre in this film can
further be evaluated from the points of view of thematic thrust and character motif.

Thematically, the film is sustained on the thrust of militancy and agitations against a system of exploitation, neglect and forceful degradation of the Niger Delta environment by the government of Nigeria. The Niger Delta youths resort to kidnap, assassinations, bombings, violence and other forms of militant activities aimed at forcing relevant authorities to save their community from environmental degradation. Even though the agitations started with peaceful protests against an intolerable practice, the failure of government to engage the Warri people of Niger Delta on a meaningful dialogue that could ameliorate their living condition leads to the option of violence.

The preponderance of action in the film is therefore predicated on this option of violence in which the Niger Delta militants engage the authorities in physical fights with the view of having their fortunes changed for good. The kidnap of Tom Hudson in the Los Angeles scene follows a high powered action in which heavy stunts, series of car chases and bashings and explosions of firearm are tactfully utilized. The Niger Delta militants had taken their struggles as far as the United States of America, the residential base of the Chief Executive Officer CEO of Western Oil. The kidnap of Tom Hudson is a blackmail attempt aimed at compelling the Nigerian government to drop the idea of hanging the reputable environmental activist, Ebiere Perema, who had been obnoxiously convicted and sentenced to death by hanging.

Furthermore, the combat and exchange of firearms between the security operatives of Nigeria and the Dede led militant group at the shore of the creek calls for serious evaluation. The management of Western Oil had asked Ebiere to mediate between the militants and the company on the need for a ceasefire to enable them have a peaceful dialogue. Unknown to Ebiere and the militants, the government is only applying a deceitful strategy to get the militants and kill them for the civil unrest they had caused in the land. At the river bank where they are to meet, the militants are rounded up by heavily armed military presence and in what appears to be surprising to both Ebiere and the militants, the military surrounds them. In a fiercely fought battle with an exchange of firearms between the military and militants, both parties record casualties as Dede, Ebiere’s love is brutally shot dead.

Another important perspective to the thematic thrust of the film is the issue of selfishness and corrupt practices on the parts of the community liaison officers and some concerned chiefs and elders of the community. Although the film reveals some levels of commitment towards the implementation of the cooperate social responsibilities (CSR) projects on the part of Western oil company, it also reveals the thwarting and total sabotage of some of those efforts by some respected stakeholders in the community for selfish gains. Perhaps, one of the success stories of company’s involvement towards the development of the community is the scholarship awarded Ebiere to pursue her university degree abroad. It is pertinent to argue at this point that Ebiere’s sense of radicalism about the environmental
pollutions in her community is a product of her training abroad. This is evidenced on the fact that the montage that chronicles her developments from childhood is only concerned about showing her progressive growth from birth through primary and secondary education and then her scholarship award which subsequently follows her departure from Nigeria. Not much is shown about her character traits and motivations until her return from the study. She returns home completely radicalized and well-grounded on environmental activism. Ironically however, her newly acquired knowledge on environmental activism becomes her weapon of war in her attempt at promoting the overall welfare of her community.

The high level of corruption and selfishness displayed by the representatives of the community in which community development is seriously marred calls for serious attention. The scene that follows the release of the sum of $500,000 (Five Hundred Thousand US Dollars) for the construction of health facility in Warri by the company exposes the high level of corruption and selfishness perpetuated by respected leaders of the community. Whereas the idea of providing health facility to promote the health condition of the entire community is a kind gesture by the authorities of the company, the implementation fizzles into the selfish pockets of chiefs of the community who unanimously agree to share the money amongst themselves. The mob action of the youths of the Warri community which leads to the burning alive of culpable chiefs in a car accounts for the trial, conviction and subsequent hanging of Ebiere Perema.

At the level of character motivations and analysis, the film is sustained by a morality struggles between the good and bad characters. Whereas the Federal military junta of Nigeria as represented by military presence in the film is motivated by the goal of enriching her coffers through inordinate exploitations of crude oil resources from Warri, the people of Warri are on the other hand, driven by the goal of protecting their community from decimation due to the adverse effects of environmental pollution and degradation in their land. While the people are not opposed to the oil company’s exploration activities in the land, they agitate for fair treatment for the devastations on their land. The crude oil explorations in Warri has in no little measure devastated the land and destroyed the rich aquatic and agrarian means of livelihood of the people. Their only source of drinking water has equally been polluted and there is nothing to show for the massive oil drilling done on the Warri community. The people feel terribly estranged from polity as they live miserably in the midst of plenty.

The negligible attitude of government and other relevant authorities in cleaning up oil spills from the community is another cause for one of the most horrendous explosions in which thousands of women and children are killed and hundreds more injured. In one of the most tragic scenes of the film, as the government and other concerned authorities fail to clean up the ravaging oil spills from the community for three days, and looking at the prevailing scarcity of petrol in the country, the villagers of Warri take to fetching of fuel from the spill for momentary consolation. As one of the
government officials who attempt to stop them from scooping the fuel lights up his cigarette, heavy fire engulfs the scooping site, killing thousands of women and children and injuring many more. Even though, the company had come to express her condolence and pay compensation to the affected families in the community, the radical environmental activist, Ebiere who also lost her mother to the oil explosion condemns this practice, noting that the relevant authorities should be more humane by focusing on meaningful and sustainable measures to their challenges instead of short term consolatory measures which they currently indulge themselves in:

EBIERE: You come here, enriching yourselves from the spoils of our land, in the process, wiping our families and generations, yet you keep the fire burning. Give the people unrest and they will rely on you. What they do is give us sickness and then, they’ll treat us, they make us hungry and then, they’ll feed us. They kill our loved ones and then offer us money for burials. It is high time you start to think more of the people, offer them your selfish fat pockets as well as that of your groups and cohorts. If you do not change your ways, the people will rise against you.

Another source of character motivation which drives the action of the film is on the need to rescue Ebiere from the court verdict of hanging. Ebiere, in her attempt to save her community from an impending mass execution over the killing of some indigenous corrupt Chief’s pleads guilty before a trial judge, thereby claiming responsibility for a crime she did not commit. In a swift verdict, the trial judge sentences her to death by hanging for the killing of the concerned chiefs. Suffice to state that the whole militant action in Los Angeles scene in which Tom Hudson is kidnapped is predicated on the motif to rescue Ebiere from the hangman in Nigeria.

The film is dominantly set in Warri, one of the ancient towns of Delta state in the Niger Delta Region of the South-south geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. Warri as represented in the film foregrounds a typically underdeveloped host community.

Ironically, the community has no structural appearance to show for the multi-billion dollars economic strength it provides for the Nigerian economy. The houses which are dominantly archaic in nature cannot boast of having good access roads and this further explains how underdeveloped the community is. Apart from the residential areas of the community which provides for part of the integral setting of the film, the creek constitutes another major aspect of the film’s setting. Looking at the riverine topography of Niger Delta which hosts the Atlantic Ocean with its tributaries spread across the region, along with the tributaries of other major rivers like the River Niger, Calabar, Orashi and Sombriere, amongst others, marine life plays a significant part in the life of the people. The film uses creek to underscore a major setting for the militancy activities in Niger Delta. Apart from the fact that it offers refuge to them, the creek affords them easy escape routes for their
terrorist activities. In the scenes that follow the kidnap of foreign expatriates of the Western Oil. The creek is used as a departing route to their final destination. The ransom paid in Ghana Must Go GMG Bag to secure the release of some kidnapped victims of the company is also delivered in the creek. Again, in the scene where Dede and his men are to dialogue with the government officials on the modalities of a ceasefire, the creek is used as the entry point for the militants. It must be emphasized at this point that in all appearances of the militants in the creek, a deep sense of aquatic display are exhibited with their boats. Their immeasurable speeds, swift cuts on their reverses, aesthetic swivelling and meanderings along with other stunts result in creating the illusion of expectant horrible action in the film.

Another place where the setting of the film is revealed is at Los Angeles, in America, this setting as opposed to the Niger Delta environment of Nigeria reveals a world class developed environment where the state of the arts houses, roads, cars, tunnels, and the likes are revealed. It is at this place that the United Peoples’ Front for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta People of Nigeria militia group effects the kidnap of Tom Hudson of the Western Oil. Looking at the fact that Western Oil which controls the major oil exploration activities in Warri, Niger Delta, is owned by the American Government which invariably becomes the residential base of the CEO of the company, it can be argued that the Niger Delta economy plays key role in the massive development of America. Unfortunately, the setting of the film reveals the Niger Delta region as impoverished while other cities as represented by the Los Angeles scene look exotic with state of the arts outlook.

The use of camera and editing techniques in the film provide another sustainable benchmark to facilitate contextual discourse on the action film genre in Nollywood. Reiterating Ayakoroma (2014, p. 95) who identifies “high energy, physical stunts, and chases, battles, fights, escapes and spectacles that take the audiences’ breath away,” it becomes suitable to analyse Black November along the line of action film. Firstly, the strength of the film, from the beginning to the end is anchored on all the action film’s paraphernalia. The kidnap scene at Los Angeles in which members of the United Peoples’ Front for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta People of Nigeria kidnap Tom Hudson follows a tacit demonstration of high energy, physical stunts, chases, battles, fights and escapes on the part of the militants that truly take the viewer’s breath away. In their bid to get Tom Hudson kidnapped amid high security presence, the film exhibits unspeakable vigour on the part of the militants to carry out their actions and still escape from the watchful eyes of eminent security presence. The editorial use of powerful stunts as demonstrated through the series of car chases, bashings, and explosions are appropriate in alluding the film as action.

The aquatic demonstration of visual spectacle by the militants as they sail along the creek is another point in focus where the film maximizes its aesthetic interactions between the camera and editing techniques in heightening the film’s narrative tempo. Restating Bean (2004, p.24):
The most notable characteristic of the action cinema is its dynamic tempo: rapid editing …. It is also true that the body takes primacy over voice in the genre, that the action film ‘speaks’ through visual spectacle, that spectacle, in fact, takes precedence over narrative meaning.”

Even though the boats appear to be sailed by experts in the art, the use of camera and editing techniques in orchestrating the actions are heightened for effects. The fast cuts, compelling stunts, variable shots and camera movements, heavy explosions along with other forms of editorial spectacles used in the film as exemplified by these scenes go a long way in delineating the incontestable roles of camera and editing techniques to the actualization of the actions in the film. Oil exploration and its attendant activities in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria have been widely considered to be a major cause of environmental pollution and degradation in the area. While crude oil constitutes the mainstay of the Nigeria economy, its exploration in the Niger Delta communities is believed to be extensively characterized by the insensitivity of State and other relevant authorities towards developing the people, a situation which has raised serious reactions that has finally culminated into militancy and civil unrest in the region. Conclusively, from the above analysis, evidences it is evident that the militancy sub-genre of action film deals with violent resistance to environmental pollution, degradation and exploitation arising from crude oil exploration and the agitation for improved living condition of host communities in the hands of government and multinational oil companies that operate in their land.

Major actions involve kidnapping and hostage taking, bombing of pipeline facilities, heavy explosions, crossfire of gunshots and other explosives devices, stunts, pursuit, escape and captivating film techniques.

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